

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

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R 311629Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5820
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
USMISSION BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION GENEVA
USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 1554

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCS

USIA FOR IBS, IEE

1. AUTHOR AND MEMBER OF MOSCOW CITY WRITERS' UNION DESCRIBED TO EMBOFF JANUARY 30 "TENSE ATMOSPHERE" IN LITERARY CIRCLES CREATED BY PUBLICATION OF SOLZHENITSYN'S BOOK AND SUBSEQUENT OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST HIM. AUTHOR RECOUNTED SUBSTANCE OF RECENT MEETING IN MOSCOW WRITERS' UNION ATTENDED BY OVER 100 MEMBERS AND CHAIRED BY ITS ORGANIZATIONAL SECRETARY, V. ILYIN, DESCRIBED AS KGB WATCHDOG. ILYIN GAVE THREATENING SPEECH, SAYING TIME WAS ONE OF "IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATION." ACCORDING TO ILYIN, SOLZHENITSYN IS NOT THE ONLY PROBLEM; THERE ARE OTHER "INTERNAL EMIGREES" WHO MUST BE DEALT WITH. WHEN ONE MEMBER CAREFULLY RAISED
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QUESTION ABOUT EXPULSION FROM UNION OF WRITER LYDIA

CHUKOVSKAYA (AT WHOSE HOME SOLZHENITSYN HAD BEEN LIVING), AND INDICATED IT DID NOT SEEM NECESSARY TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST AN AGED, BLIND WOMAN, ILYIN ANGRILY RESPONDED "WE DO NOT RECOGNIZE AGE OR SEX. EVEN LENIN SHOT WOMEN WHEN HE HAD TO."

2. SOURCE STATED THAT THERE WERE OTHER SIGNS OF VIGILANCE CAMPAIGN, INCLUDING SEARCHES OF APARTMENTS OF SUSPECT FIGURES FOR COMPROMISING PAPERS. WELL KNOWN AUTHOR VIKTOR NEKRASOV RECENTLY HAD HIS APARTMENT SEARCHED, AND SOLZHENITSYN'S FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE, LEV KOPELEV, IS BEING HARRASSED AND THREATENED, ACCORDING TO SOURCE.

3. AUTHOR STATED THAT "MANY" WRITERS WERE SECRETLY GLAD THAT SOLZHENITSYN HAD AUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF GULAG AND ADMIRER HIM FOR HIS BRAVERY AND UNCOMPROMISING NATURE, DESPITE PERSONAL PROBLEMS HE HAD CAUSED THEM. ALMOST NONE OF THEM, HOWEVER, WOULD BE WILLING TO DEFEND HIM, ESPECIALLY NOW, AND "MANY MORE" WERE SO FEARFUL OF BEING SUSPECTED THAT THEY WOULD DO WHATEVER AUTHORITIES WANTED. SOURCE'S OPINION, HOWEVER, WAS THAT LEADING WRITERS COULD REFUSE TO SIGN LETTERS ATTACKING SOLZHENITSYN WITHOUT RISK. THOSE WHO SIGNED WERE EITHER "BELIEVERS" IN REGIME LINE OR NEEDED SOMETHING FROM GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING SOURCE, GULAG IS SUBJECT OF GREAT INTEREST IN CULTURAL CIRCLES. MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS IS FOREIGN RADIO. AS FAR AS SOURCE KNEW, HOWEVER, NO ONE HAD YET BEEN ABLE TO HEAR MUCH OF GULAG TEXT BECAUSE OF JAMMING.

4. AUTHOR STATED THAT IT WAS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE PREDICTION ABOUT SOLZHENITSYN'S FATE BECAUSE EVEN OFFICIAL WRITERS HAD LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF AUTHORITIES' THINKING OR PLANS. SOURCE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT, DESPITE SMEAR CAMPAIGN, THERE HAD AS YET BEEN NO SPECIFIC THREAT TO PUNISH SOLZHENITSYN, BUT SAID, "FOR ALL WE KNOW THEY COULD KILL HIM TOMORROW AND NO ONE WOULD BE SURPRISED." SOURCE MENTIONED AS POSSIBILITY THREATS OF, OR POSSIBLY ACTUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST SOLZHENITSYN'S FAMILY TO FORCE HIM TO LEAVE COUNTRY "VOLUNTARILY."

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5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH VIEWS ABOVE MAY BE SOMEWHAT COLORED BY ADMIRATION FOR SOLZHENITSYN, AUTHOR IS BALANCED, CANDID PERSON WHO HAS BEEN RELIABLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION IN THE PAST.
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